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DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Division of Information Systems and Communications

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Governor

DAN STANLEY
Secretary of Administration

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October 14, 1997

Honorable William Caton
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N.W., Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: CC Docket 96-45 - Comments on Universal Service Support Distribution Options
In Response to Public Notice DA 97-1957 Issued September 10, 1997

Dear Secretary Caton:

The Kansas Department of Administration (DofA), Division of Information Systems & Communications (DISC) files these comments in response to the September 10, 1997, Public Notice issued by the FCC Common Carrier Bureau on the Universal Service fund distribution methods and application process for schools, libraries, and rural health care facilities. As a member and active participant in the NASTD organization, DISC fully supports the comments filed by the National Association of State Telecommunications Directors in the above-referenced proceeding.

Kansas Statutes Annotated 75-4709, assigns responsibility for the Control of telecommunication service of state agencies under the Secretary of Administration; extension to certain private, nonprofit corporations or governmental units. Any governmental unit is described as including any state agency, taxing subdivision of the state or municipality or any hospital or nonprofit corporation which the Secretary determines to be performing any state function on an ongoing basis through agreement or otherwise. Schools and libraries are either governmental units or fall into the category of nonprofit corporation .

The following list is an example of the types of groups that are currently using the network:

- All State agencies (including the Dept. Of Education, and state funded universities)
- County governmental subdivisions
- City governmental subdivisions
- K-12 School districts and Educational Service Centers
- Governmental and private hospitals
- Private agencies working through any of the groups listed above.

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The Kansas Statewide network (KANS-A-N) is designed to transmit all types of communications signals, including voice, data, video, and image. Kansas Statutes require that all services be competitively procured. All services, with the exception of local services in a government building or campus are leased from the telecommunications industry. These services include the following:

- Long Distance Telephone Service
- Local telephone Service
- Dedicated Data Service
- SNA Transport Service
- Capitol Complex fiber connectivity
- Internet Access
- Router Transport Service
- Frame Relay Transport Service
- Video Teleconferencing
- Desktop Video service over local and statewide networks.

Currently, DISC maintains detailed and separate records for inventory and billing on the services provided to all our users. Our record keeping system is sufficient to provide the necessary detail to identify the dollar amounts of individual USF discounts for each eligible entity. It is hoped that the additional requirements for methods to separate and report the accounting for individual entities will remain simple and be compatible with our established System.

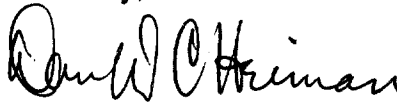
In its role as a facilitator of state service, DISC is statutorily required to obtain the best pricing for its users through competitively procured purchasing and contract negotiation. All state agencies are required to utilize State of Kansas contracts and KANS-A-N network services. However, political subdivisions, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations are allowed under the statutes to use state contracts and KANS-A-N network services. Since DISC is the agent and manager of master contracts supporting state services, the members of the DISC consortium should be exempt from the requirement that requested telecommunications service for USF discounts be posted on the SLC web site. As required by state public records law, all DISC contracts are accessible and will be available if requested by the SLC. In addition, eligible entities who have joined with our consortia should not be required to file copies of these voluminous contracts with each individual USF application but instead should be allowed to merely reference the state contracts that relate to the telecommunications service discounts requested.

In summary, DISC supports the comments filed by the National State Telecommunications Directory (NASTD). As aggregator for the consortia of eligible facilities in Kansas, DISC seeks recognition as agent to directly obtain discounts from the USF based on DISC's published rates. In this role, DISC must adhere to the State's competitive procurement laws and contracting process, and therefore Kansas eligible facilities would be disadvantaged by Web posting requirements and arbitrary contract limits. DISC also requests that the USF application form be simple and straightforward.

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The State of Kansas, through the Department of Administration, Division of Information Systems and Communications, appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the USF application and distribution process since the requirements set up by the FCC and SLC will greatly influence the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the DISC process in procuring Advance Telecommunications Service for Kansas schools, libraries, and rural health facilities. To summarize our main concern, it is crucial that the USF processes established on a national level not become burdensome to Kansas Institutions, but instead dovetail with our State's own initiatives in working toward the common goal of universal access for education and rural health care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Donald C. Heiman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Donald" and last name "Heiman" being clearly legible.

Donald C. Heiman
Director, DISC

DCH:ee